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Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Steps to promote the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East

Report submitted by Canada

1. At the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Canada supported a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Canada also played a key role in the adoption of a resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference last September. While Israel maintains a policy of nuclear ambiguity, it is widely assumed to have developed a significant nuclear weapons capability. Canada has stated that it is convinced that this program is not in the long-term interests of Israel, of regional stability and of global security. Canada has called upon Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

2. Canada has also called for full adherence and compliance with the Treaty by States parties in the region, and has urged those six States in the region that have not concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA to do so. Canada has appealed to all states in the region to further contribute to regional stability and security by concluding Additional Protocols to their respective safeguards agreements, thereby demonstrating greater openness and transparency. Canada fully supports efforts by the IAEA to convene, as soon as possible, a forum on the application of safeguards, in which countries from the Middle East and other interested parties could learn from the experience of other regions about comprehensive verification arrangements and other confidence building measures that could contribute to the establishment of a nuclear weapons-free zone.

3. While Canada recognizes that Iran has a right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, a number of significant unresolved questions about the scope and extent of Iran's nuclear program remain. At successive meetings of the IAEA Board of Governors and following four reports issued by the Agency, Canada joined consensus on three strong resolutions addressing this important issue. Canada has encouraged Iran to ratify promptly the Additional Protocol to its safeguards agreement that it has signed. Canada has been actively supporting IAEA efforts to verify Iran's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and has raised its concerns bilaterally with Iran on numerous occasions.

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